



## Request for Crosswalks / Reduced Speed Limit on Mystic Street

1 message

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To: laura.swan.tac@gmail.com

Wed, Nov 9, 2022 at 3:32 PM

Dear Ms. Swan,

I am a resident of Beverly Road and a future Bishop Elementary School parent. I am writing to request that the committee undertake a study of Mystic Street to determine if additional crosswalks and a reduced speed limit are warranted to improve pedestrian safety and mobility. If this is not the correct committee, can you please kindly direct us to the right team?

Although Mystic Street (Route 3) is a primary automotive route into and out of downtown Arlington, it is also an important pedestrian route for three primary reasons: (i) parents walking their children to Bishop Elementary, (ii) commuters leveraging the road to access its many bus stops, and (iii) residents/cyclists using the street for recreation and exercise traveling to downtown, the Window to the Mystic and the larger loop around the Mystic Lakes.

Coming from downtown Arlington toward Winchester, there is currently only two crosswalks starting from the intersection at Mystic Valley Parkway to the Town Line: (i) the first at the intersection of Mystic Valley Parkway / Mystic Street and (ii) the intersection of Columbia Road / Mystic Street.

While there is only 1/4 mile from the first crosswalk to the second, there are no crosswalks from the Columbia Road / Mystic Street intersection to the Town Line (nearly 1 mile away). In addition, the next crosswalk on Mystic Street is nearly 1.5 miles away at Everett Ave / Mystic Street in Winchester. Further, the speed limit jumps to 35MPH at the intersection of Draper / Mystic in Arlington despite barely clearing the school zone for Bishop students (while the street otherwise has a speed limit of 25MPH elsewhere in Arlington and 30MPH in Winchester, and cars commonly drive at speeds exceeding 40MPH on this street).

Between the crosswalk at Columbia Road / Mystic Street in Arlington and the next crosswalk 1.5 miles away at Everett Ave / Mystic Street in Winchester, there are over .5 miles of road that is commonly traversed by parents and elementary-age students, as well as at least 8 bus stops (4 in Arlington and 4 in Winchester) that require pedestrians to cross the street to either catch the inbound or outbound bus. Over 200 homes on the lake side of Mystic Street are left with only one crosswalk (the crosswalk at Columbia Road / Mystic Street) between the Town Line and Bishop, and many more homes on the other side of the street are faced with the same dilemma when they desire to access the lake side of the street.

This means pedestrians are faced with two options: (i) walk up to .75 miles to the nearest crosswalk (potentially in the wrong direction) or (ii) risk crossing a busy and fast-paced street without a crosswalk. Too often I observe pedestrians, cyclists, and parents/students trying to sprint across the street between gaps in traffic due to the inaccessibility of proper sidewalks.

Due to our location on Beverly Road (where the speed limit jumps to 35MPH and the street curves in a manner that makes it unclear at night whether Mystic Street veers left or continues straight), we often observe pedestrians and cyclists attempting to cross the street with vehicles traveling in excess of the speed limit without proper site lines to traffic flowing in both directions. The risks are compounded by the street curve at this section, which often leads motorists (particularly at night) to end up close to the shoulder or even nearly in the Beverly / Mystic intersection while pedestrians and cyclists try to navigate the Beverly Road intersection and Mystic Street. These factors combine to create an environment where the risk of motorist-pedestrian collision is significantly higher than elsewhere in town.

As a result, I respectfully ask the committee to undertake a study with the aim of (i) adding additional crosswalks along Mystic Street (potentially every .25 miles with those flashing signs that can be activated when pressed by a pedestrian), (ii) adding a crosswalk and/or raised divider across Beverly Road where Mystic Street first intersects at the street (to protect pedestrians from motorists not realizing the road curves, and (iii) reducing the speed limit on Mystic Street to no more than 30MPH from the Columbia Road / Mystic Street intersection to the Town Line).

I know that adding additional crosswalks and reducing speed limits involves a lot of planning and work, but I believe these efforts are warranted to help protect elementary-aged students and the pedestrians/cyclists seeking to take advantage of Arlington's strong schools, beautiful Mystic Lakes, and busy downtown. I hope that the Committee is willing to consider this request and gather data so that we can possibly see new crosswalks and reduced speed limits before the start of the next school year.

Please let me know if I can do anything to help with this initiative. Thank you for your time and for serving as a representative of our community.

Best,

Nick and Nicole Farnsworth  
Precinct 11